

Above: Loving the water and sun at the cottage this summer

> eft: Illustrator Michael Martchenko,

Liam's buddy

The Voice of Liam's Light

lewsletter

Supporting Research and Care for Pediatric Transplants

Greetings....
To all of our family and friends!



HIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR WHERE WE REFLECT UPON ALL OF THE PAST YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FEELINGS OF WELL BEING .. AND BOY DID LIAM'S LIGHT EVER HAVE A GREAT YEAR!

As many of you know in May 2006 we opened up the much anticipated Liam's Light Step Down unit on 6A at SickKids. The very next day they had patients recovering from recent organ transplants in the room and the feedback from all has been overwhelming. The

unit is beautiful, vibrant and full of joy and showcases some of the beautiful illustrations from the Michael Martchenko art collection. The children love it so much that even when they are well

enough to move from the step down unit and head into their own private rooms, they still tend to pop their heads in on the unit to see the familiar drawings.

We held our 2nd annual Liam's Light walkathon at the end of September and miraculously it didn't rain! We had over 65 walkers with 45 pledge sheets and we raised over \$20,000! An incredible amount! We thank all those that supported us, or came out and walked. A special thank-you to Stan Thompson, Ed Foley



second and third for individuals who raised the most pledges-well done!

Liam started Kew Park Montessori Day School this September and he is absolutely in love with school! We are so excited for him, and thrilled that he is so excited about learning. He is very proud to be the best grade 1 child with cursive writing! He also seems to have settled in with some great kids, going on playdates and being invited to birthday parties and to him, that is the ultimate!

Liam wanted to inform the school and the children about his illness. He asked if I could come to the school and speak to the kids and tell them about "his something". We have always been open with Liam about his illness, and Liam has been exceptional about dealing with it. However we had a period where Liam was very angry and mad that he had to take medicine, and get procedures at the hospital, and somehow we came up with a saying that everybody has a "something". This in a nutshell is a straight forward explanation which helps Liam understand that he is not alone or the only person that has "something" different about themselves. Together we go through every person we know who has "a something", from Auntie Lisa's new hip, Gampi's heart, mommy's bad ankle, Kensey's knee..... to Nani's Hammertoe! It's simple and easy and he loves to go though the list of his friends and everyone's "Something".

We believe that yes his illness is rare, but this simple explanation helps him to feel accepted, understood, and part of a group.

It was Liam's idea to speak about his "something" to his new school, and it was his idea that we ask other kids in

the group to come forward and speak about their "something".

He thought this might help those kids feel it was ok to have something different about themselves. So, together Liam and I sat in the assembly room in early October and talked about his 'something". It was a beautiful moment. One

by one little hands were raised and kids started to openly discuss what their "something" was. From glasses, to hearing aids, to trouble tying laces, to nosebleeds...we came up with a great list of "something's"



So why am I telling you this?

THE NEWS:

The good news....mid October I received a phone call from a woman named Susan McLellan who owns her own communications company and has worked for the hospital in the past and luckily for us, the hospital has chosen Liam's Light to be the recipient of her great work. Her goal is to raise the "brand" of Liam's Light up a notch. We are very excited to be working with Susan McLellan from Babble On Communications.

We met with Susan, thought she was great and in that meeting it was her suggestion that we write a book about Liam's "something". This was a challenging and daunting task for us! However she is confident she will be able to get a publisher interested! We also approached Michael Martchenko to do all the illustrations and he has graciously agreed! **SO we are writing a book!** Not only is this a feel good book for kids, and empowering to Liam, but it's also a great fundraiser! Money from the book will go towards Liam's Light. We will keep you all posted!

We have also gone live with our website so please visit www.liamslight.org and see all the great work that Vigeon Design & Associates has done on our website. There are pictures of the step down unit, the walkathon and it's a great place to visit to learn more and get updates on Liam's Light.

On November 30th, 2006 at SickKids Hospital we saw the unveiling in the Donor Walk of Fame of the new plaque for Liam's Light. We have moved from the Patron division of charities to the proud title of Benefactor. (those who have

raised \$250,000-\$500,000). We were excited and proud to see the hall and we encourage all of you to pop in and take a look at the plaque as it reflects ALL our hard work over the years.

So this brings us to a close. We are honored to have such wonderful family and friends who continue to support and share in our passion, our son Liam and his charity Liam's Light. We wish you all joy and peace in this season of festivities, and great health to you and you're families for the New Year 2007!

Love
Deborah, Doug and Liam

